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## **Sen. Gilbert legislation urges real-time monitoring and new spill notification procedures**

**Lansing** – In response to yet another chemical spill in the St. Clair River, Sen. Jud Gilbert, R-Algonac, is introducing legislation requiring new notification procedures in the event of a spill and a resolution requesting the development of a real-time monitoring system.

Gilbert's bill requires the responsible party to immediately notify local health departments in the event of a spill. This proposed law will be effective in getting notification to water plants and residents more quickly.

"It has been proven that the current notification system is ineffective and I plan to change that for the safety of local residents," Gilbert said. "It is imperative these new procedures be put in place as quickly as possible to better protect the public in the event of a future spill."

The bill also would require the responsible party to submit a full written explanation of the cause of the spill, what types of materials were released, quantities, response measures taken, and what steps are being taken to prevent another spill.

Gilbert's resolution urges the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the Office of the Great Lakes to work with the EPA Great Lakes National Program Office to use a portion of the Great Lakes Legacy Act funding to develop a pilot program for a real-time water quality monitoring system for Lake St. Clair and the St. Clair River.

"We cannot allow these incidents to continually put our local residents in danger," Gilbert said. "Real-time water monitoring can provide greater protection and prompt notification in order to shut down intake systems and let people know to avoid the water."

(More)

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced in January that President George W. Bush will ask Congress for \$45 million for Great Lakes cleanup in his 2005 budget, more than quadruple the amount in this year's budget. The money in the Great Lakes Legacy Act would be used to start or accelerate cleanup of contaminated rivers and harbors that have been designated as areas of concern. The St. Clair River is one of these areas.

Gilbert's resolution states that testing the real-time monitoring system at strategic points along the St. Clair River and Lake St. Clair could eventually benefit other vulnerable areas around the Great Lakes. Real-time monitoring would provide a greater level of protection than the current notification systems in place.

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**Comments from Sen. Gilbert regarding his chemical spill legislation are available for download on the Senate Majority Audiowire at [www.senate.michigan.gov/gop](http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop) or by calling the radio hotline at 517-373-4000.**